

NATIONAL YOUTH SPORTS SAFETY FOUNDATION, INC.

GUIDELINES

HOW TO BE A SUPPORTIVE COACH

- **Know your players as individuals.**

Be sensitive to their needs in both sports and in their personal lives.

- **Be patient.**

Players get frustrated too. A tense atmosphere is not conducive to learning.

- **Be fair.**

Players depend on a coach to make decisions that are fair. A fair coach teaches fair play.

- **Be free with praise and give constructive criticism.**

Praise motivates, harsh words hurt.

- **Be consistent.**

Do not give preferred treatment to the superstar. Discipline and team rules apply equally to all team members.

- **Be available to your players.**

Being a friend as well as a coach will earn trust and respect.

- **Provide players with a mentor/role model in yourself.**

Lead by example. What you say and what you do must be consistent.

- **Listen to your players and let them have input into planning activities.**

Take their criticism not as an attack, but as their wanting to play an active role.

- **Never use a player to further your own interests.**

Looking at a player as your "ticket" is not coaching. There is no place for a self-serving coach in any sport.

- **Never break a player's self-confidence.**

Always give specifics when making changes or giving constructive criticism.

- **Know how to motivate your players.**

Each individual has a unique motivating factor; find out what it is.

- **Set realistic goals for your players as individuals and for the team as a whole.**

Help athletes progress from potential to reality. Use short term and long term goal setting.

- **Vary practice routines and make workouts fun.**

Fun is the top motivating factor for participating in sports by most athletes. Make fun the number one priority at all your practices. Practice should always be representative of actual competition.

- **Keep the team functioning as a TEAM.**

This should happen naturally as a result of good coaching. Being aware of players individual differences will help prevent personality conflicts. Demonstrating qualities such as fairness, patience, consistency, and leadership will lead to good moral among the team. Remember the team is a direct reflection of the coach.

Susan E. Warren and Donna Volpe
National Youth Sports Safety Foundation, Inc.

Copyright 2001 NYSSF All rights reserved

333 LONGWOOD AVENUE, SUITE 202 • BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02115 • 617-277-1171

